

THE REFORMER AND CHRISTIAN.

Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth.—*Jeremiah*, v. 1.

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DIVINE GOVERNMENT.

[By T. Southwood Smith.]

Whoever believes that the system of the universe did not start into being without a designing cause, acknowledges that its author is every where present. Omnipresence is an attribute which seems essential to the very notion of a God. It is true we cannot understand how at one and the same instant he is present in every part of the universe; but this difficulty in conceiving of the mode of the fact, neither does nor ought to bring any doubt upon our belief of the fact itself, because our comprehension of every subject whatever, is equally obscure and imperfect. We understand nothing of the mode of the existence of any being. We know that we ourselves exist, but we have no conception of the manner in which the wonderful phenomena of life are produced and continued. Of the existence of the Deity it is impossible to doubt. We see his works: we feel his power: but in what manner he exists we do not know, because we have no data upon which to form even a conjecture respecting the mode of his existence. The reason that we do not know how he is every where present, is, because we do not know how he is present any where; that is, because we do not at all comprehend the mode of his existence.

We see that man is bound to a little spot of earth, and that his presence at one time is restricted to that spot. This being the only kind of existence with which our senses have made us acquainted, it is natural that we should find it difficult to conceive how a Being can at the same moment be here, and in the most distant part of the globe,

and in the most distant planet! But whatever be the mode of existence of the Deity, we must necessarily conceive of it as different from our own. For at all events he has been present in this globe; in the planets which form our system; in the sun which is its centre; in every fixed star; in a word, wherever we behold a planet or a star. Whatever these bodies are, they are something; some of them are of immense magnitude, and are placed at such distances from each other, as to be beyond our power of calculation; and no one will contend that they placed themselves where they are. Now he who could place them there; he, the constitution of whose nature admits of his ever having been present at these inconceivable distances, must possess a nature so essentially different from ours, that we ought to have no difficulty in supposing that it may allow of his being present at them at one and the same time, as easily as at successive periods. As our mode of existence confines our presence to one spot at one time, his may be such as necessarily makes him present in every part of the universe.

Many writers on this subject appear needlessly to have magnified the difficulty which attends our conception of it. They seem in general to think that the Deity bears no relation whatever to space: that in fact he is actually present no where, and that of course it is only in a figurative sense that he is omnipresent. But surely it is more just to conceive of him as *really* pervading all space, as *actually* present in every part of the universe. This idea is at least distinct, and enables us to conceive in a satisfactory manner of his

universal operation; while the view commonly entertained is extremely confused: for do what we will, we can form no idea of a being who bears no relation to space; and if we could, we should still be pressed with the difficulty of conceiving how a being can operate where he is not: but if we admit the hypothesis now proposed, we can readily believe that the Deity operates every where, for according to it he is every where.

In whatever manner, however, we may conceive of the omnipresence of the Deity, we must all admit the fact itself, that by the necessity of his nature, he is every where, and that by the same necessity he knows every thing. And no other admission is requisite to establish in the most satisfactory manner his universal and perfect government. His benevolent eye is upon me; his almighty arm is beneath me; with the situation in which I am placed, he is infinitely better acquainted in all its parts, than I am with any single circumstance in it. He knows that a certain event is about to befall me: he understands its nature: he foresees its consequences: he is perfectly wise: he is infinitely good. Would he then permit it to happen, did he not foresee it would answer some wise and benevolent purpose? Can we conceive that he is every where present without acting? That he knows every thing without availing himself of the power he possesses, to prevent what is wrong and to accomplish what is right? That, though he is perfectly acquainted with every evil which is about to arise, and perfectly able to prevent it, he will not stretch out his hand to do so? That the original source of all activity is the only inactive being in the universe, and the source of all energy the only being who does not exert his power?

If this opinion be absurd in itself, and unsupported by the shadow of reason, there is but one other conclusion which can be adopted, namely, that every event which happens to every creature, takes place according

to the appointment of the Deity.* No-

**Note by the Ed. Ref.*—This language appears too strong or unguarded. Admit, as all do admit, that man is a free agent, it must be evident that many events happen, or acts are done, not in accordance with the divine approval or approbation. But, that the wisdom and power of God will overrule all events, and even the wrath of man, to his own glory and the ultimate happiness and welfare of the largest portion of his creatures, so that all the *unrighteousness of men*, which God permits to take place, will in the end *commend the righteousness of God* in permitting it to take place, seems to be almost universally conceded. Even Wesley, one of the greatest advocates for the free agency of man, admits that nothing is permitted to take place except what will ultimately redound to, or commend the righteousness of God in suffering it to have an existence; agreeably to that passage in Psalms lxxvi. 10, "*Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.*" The following are the words of Wesley on this subject, in his notes on Romans iii. 5. 6. "If it were unjust in God to punish that unrighteousness, which is subservient to his own glory, *how should God judge the world?* since all the unrighteousness in the world, will then *commend the righteousness of God.*"

The fall of man was no doubt contemplated and foreseen when man was created, and was only permitted that a greater good might arise to men than would otherwise be allotted to them. For mankind would never have arrived to such a condition of glory and happiness hereafter, as will now be the case, had they not been placed in a probationary state of great difficulty and trial, such as now exists, and had there not been so many obstacles and hindrances in the way of pursuing a life of virtue. Agreeable to the words of the apostle, we must *suffer* before we can *reign*; and *strive* before we are *crowned*. How every trial, suffering, or affliction that befalls us, or that is permitted to come upon us, is to eventuate in our good, we cannot now see; but it will be seen hereafter to have so eventuated towards us if we have acted with sincerity and uprightness of intention. We are told from scripture that *every transgression and disobedience will receive a just recompense of reward*, and that each will *receive according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad*. Of this therefore we may be certain; but the cause and ultimate end of all the Lord's dealings towards us; the reasons why so

thing can be more frivolous than the objection, that the watchfulness which many trials, conflicts, and sufferings are permitted to come upon us, and the designs and purposes of the Lord in allowing them to take place, who can tell or comprehend but that all wise and infinite Being who knows all things, and who cannot err in any of his dispensations towards his creatures. That they are all right and good, and are all ordered for us a thousand times better than we could order things for ourselves, is as certain as our own existence; and nothing but ignorance, if not impiety, can for a moment permit us to question its truth.

It was the designs and purposes of the Almighty in his dealings towards the children of men, and particularly towards the Israelites in permitting so many trials to come upon them, that was no doubt meant when Moses asked the Lord to show him "*his way*" or "*his glory*," probably meaning the glory of his ways. To this it was answered; "*thou canst not see my face* [or the fulness of my perfections, and the grandeur of my designs:] *for there shall no man see me* [or see the fulness of my perfections, and the glory and excellency of my designs] *and live.*" A commentator on this place, says: "Moses perceived that what God was now doing had the most important and gracious designs, which at present he could not distinctly discover; therefore he desires God to show him his way or his glory. God graciously promises to indulge him in this request as far as possible, by *proclaiming his name, and making all his goodness pass before him.* Ex. xxxiii. 19. But at the same time he assures him, that he *could not see his face*,—the fulness of his perfections, and the grandeur of his designs—*and live*; as no human being could bear, in the present state, this full discovery."

It will, therefore, never be permitted to any one while in this life to see the fulness of God's perfections, and the glory and excellency of his designs, even in the creation and government of the world; much less will any be able, while in their present state of existence, to comprehend the wisdom, goodness and mercy of the Almighty, in all his ways and dealings towards the children of men. It would not be to their advantage to do this in their present condition. It is sufficient for us to know that the Lord reigns, and that we are called to rejoice on this account. His superintending care and providence extends to the smallest events that befall us; and he will order those events

this supposes over the most trifling concerns of the most insignificant creature is unworthy of the Sovereign of the universe. Whatever it was not beneath him to create, it cannot be beneath him to provide for and to protect; and whatever is of any importance, either to the present or the future comfort of any being, is worthy of care in the degree in which it may be the means of enjoyment or the cause of suffering.

Its minuteness cannot render it unworthy of notice, if it be of any consequence; and what would detract from the dignity and greatness of the Governor of the universe would be, not his taking care of these minute concerns, but his neglecting them.

A great part of animal enjoyment depends upon what we are accustomed to consider as little things. A great number of little things, particularly if they often recur, become of greater importance than any single event, however vast or momentous; they produce, taken together, a larger sum of enjoyment, and there seems no possible way of taking care of this collective sum, but by taking care of particular events. And, indeed, the superintendence of minute events implies as much dignity as the superintendence of great events,

according to the counsels of infinite wisdom and goodness. Said the Saviour to his disciples, not a *sparrow fall:th on the ground without your Father.* He likewise told them that the very hairs of their heads were all numbered, and that not one of them should perish. Language could not well express things more minute. But how little true faith exists at this time in regard to these things; and how very few have any realizing sense of that governing and superintending care and providence of God which he most assuredly exercises towards all the beings whom he has created. Indeed, the Lord himself only can give and establish such a living and true faith in the hearts of men; and when it is established the mind can repose in peace and tranquillity amidst all the turmoils, commotions and overturnings with which it may be surrounded.

[For further remarks respecting the inquiry made by Moses, see at the end of this article.]

and our admiration is never more excited than when we contemplate an intelligence, which, while it directs the most grand and mighty movements, overlooks not the most insignificant concern capable of effecting the ultimate result. That superintendence which extends its care to the least obvious circumstance, no less than to the most striking, is certainly more perfect than that which regards only such events, as no intelligent being could possibly overlook.

The apprehension that this constant superintendence of events, from the minutest circumstance which is capable of exciting sensation, up to those mighty movements which affect the condition of worlds, must be attended with perplexity to the Deity, originates in conceptions equally unenlightened and imperfect. He is at all times present every where, and every where is capable of exerting his power. The superintendence of all the events in the universe, therefore, can be attended with no more trouble to him than the superintendence of any single event. The whole of possibility must at all times be equally easy to the Being who possesses infinite power.

We have therefore abundant reason to rest in the delightful assurance, that of every event which takes place, all the care is taken, which perfect wisdom can dictate, and infinite goodness require: that all its consequences are foreseen and considered; that its time, its place, its measure, its duration, are all appointed by him who first set in motion the complicated and mighty wheels which bring it round.

Of this sublime truth, which nothing but its greatness can lead us to doubt, we may be further assured, by the consideration of the relation which the Creator necessarily bears to his creatures. He is not merely their Creator. By the very act of creation, he unites himself to them by a tie, but feebly represented by that which binds a parent to his child. He is their Father in a much more near and real sense

than any human parent is the father of his offspring, and the best feelings of earthly parents must be exceeded by his in the degree in which he is more perfect than they. Yet a good father lives but to labour for the welfare of his family. A tender mother, while she presses her child to her bosom, anxiously considers how she may best avail herself of the situation in which she is placed to advance its happiness; wishes she had the command of circumstances, and could prevent the occurrence of every event capable of endangering its virtue and enjoyment.

This power, so vainly desired by human parents, is possessed by the Universal Parent, and is it possible to believe that he will not exert it for the welfare of his offspring? With unerring wisdom and unbounded goodness, must he not feel towards them in the best manner; and since no power in the universe is capable of controlling his will, must he not at all times act towards them as these feelings dictate?

No other consideration surely can be necessary to make every intelligent being satisfied with his lot, and resigned to the dispensations which befall him.

Many of the events of life, it is true, are deeply afflictive. Often our enjoyments seem given us but to be removed, and even the most secure, we hold by an uncertain tenure. The inequalities in health; in the duration of life; in the distribution of property; the prevalence of natural and moral evil in their thousand shapes, sometimes press with such severity upon the mind, as to create even in the most pious and confiding, a doubt whether a Being of perfect benevolence be indeed seated at the helm of affairs. Our very hearts die within us when sickness and death assail our beloved friends. But even in these moments of sadness we must be unjust to ourselves, and to the Author of our mercies, if we are not soon revived by the consciousness of benevolence, to which the severity of anguish may for a while have made us insensible. The privation of our friends, afflictive as it

is, is never without benefit to us. It is then we feel that we are born for immortality; that the world is not our home; that we are travelling to a fairer clime: it is then that we enter into religion, and feel its genuine spirit. The same happy effects are often produced by sickness, and to the natural and moral disorders which prevail, we owe the production and the growth of the highest excellencies of our nature. In a word, an attentive consideration of what are termed the evils of life, enables us to discover so much of the truest benevolence in many of them, as may well induce us to bear with resignation those whose design we cannot so fully comprehend, until it shall please our heavenly Father to give us clearer light and stronger vision.

Whether the Deity govern the universe by such an original adjustment as secures, with undeviating order, the occurrence of every thing in its proper season, place and manner, according to the plan which his wisdom and goodness have ordained; or whether he govern it by a continual superintendence of events, every thing, on either supposition, is entirely in his hands. It is possible that the first is his plan: he may have adopted the second: both must be alike easy to him: but since both were equally in his power, he can have been induced to choose the one rather than the other, only because the one is better adapted than the other to accomplish the purpose of benevolence: and it seems scarcely possible for us not to conclude, that these purposes may be better effected by the second than by the first, and therefore that this is the plan which he has adopted.

To sum up the whole argument. If of every event all the care is not taken, which it is right should be taken, the administration of the world is imperfect; but the wisdom, power and goodness which are spent on the minutest and the meanest object we can contemplate, necessarily lead to the conclusion, that their author possesses these attributes in a perfect measure;

and since they have been exerted in the production of particular objects, they must be employed in the government of the whole. We have therefore the most solid ground to adopt the sublime and cheering conclusion, that nothing can happen without the knowledge and permission of unerring wisdom and perfect goodness, and that all the vast affairs of the universe, in every particular circumstance, and in every instant of time, are under the wisest and the best direction.

The preceding arguments are founded on the perfections which the Deity is universally acknowledged to possess, and their truth must be admitted by every consistent theist: but if God have given to his intelligent offspring a revelation of his will; if he have altered the course of nature in attestation of its truth; if to prove the divinity of the mission of the great personage whom he raised up to communicate it, he endowed him with the power of performing such stupendous works as no being unassisted by him could possibly accomplish; if mankind were in want of a revelation; if the revelation actually given be in every respect suited to supply it; if it be calculated to rectify their errors, to purify their hearts, to exalt their hopes, to dignify their pursuits, to promote their truest welfare here, and to prepare them for pure and ever increasing happiness hereafter: if all the circumstances of time, place and method were admirably adapted to give it effect, and to secure the most important objects it is designed to accomplish, then is the doctrine of providence established on a new basis. Every christian must believe that the affairs of mankind are under the direction of the Deity; that he has not cut himself off from all interference with the wants and happiness of his creatures; that he does interpose for their welfare as he sees occasion; for the Christian system is one of the most illustrious and delightful instances of that interposition.

If from the fact itself of a divine rev-

elation, we descend to the particular doctrines which it contains, we shall find the most decisive evidence of this truth. It is recognized in every page; it is affirmed on innumerable occasions, and in every variety of form. God is there represented as the Sovereign Arbitrator of events; as the great being who sitteth on the circle of the earth, judging among the nations. By him kings reign and princes decree justice: he exalteth one and abaseth another: he turneth round the mighty wheel of events, retaining every individual in the situation which he judges fit. "He hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth; he hath determined their appointed times, and the place of their habitations."

Our revered Master assures us, that not even a sparrow falleth to the ground without the will of our heavenly Father; and that the very hairs of our head are all numbered; meaning, it is evident, that our most trifling concerns are appointed by him. "Behold," says he, "the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? And why are ye anxious about raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which flourishes to-day and to-morrow is cast into the furnace, will he not much more clothe you? Take not therefore anxious thought, saying, what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed? For your heavenly Father knoweth that you have need of all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

The argument which our Lord here employs is beautiful and affecting. Every one must have felt its force; and I, and the myriads of creatures who in

common with me enjoy the boon of existence, have reason to rejoice.

THE REQUEST OF MOSES,— AND THE ISRAELITES.

[As a further explanation of some passages in Exodus, where Moses requested the Lord to show him *his way*, the following is added by the assistance of a learned commentator.]

Moses in *Exodus* xxxiii. 13, said unto the Lord; *I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, show me now thy way.* The Lord answered; "*my presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.*" It is explained as more agreeable to the original; "*my faces shall go with thee.* I shall give thee MANIFESTATIONS of my grace and goodness through the whole of thy journey. I shall vary my APPEARANCES, as thy necessities shall require." Moses answered, "if thy presence go not—if thy faces do not go with us, if we have not *manifestations* of thy peculiar providence & grace, carry us not up hence." Without *supernatural* assistance, and a most *particular* providence, Moses knew that it would be impossible either to govern such a people, or support them in the desert; and therefore he wished to be well assured on this head, that he may lead them up with confidence, and be able to give them the most explicit assurance of support and protection. Moses continues; "*For wherein shall it be known that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight?*" *is it not in that thou goest with us* [in thy manifestations and appearances;] *so shall we be separated from all the people that are upon the face of the earth. And the Lord said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken,*" in regard to going in my *manifestations* with the Israelites and causing them to be a separate people from all others.

"Both these promises," observes a writer, "have been remarkably fulfilled. God continued miraculously with them, till he brought them into the promised land; and from the day in which he

brought them out of Egypt, to the present day, he has kept them a *distinct, unmixed* people! Who can account for this on any principle but that of a continual especial providence, and a constant divine interference? The Jews have ever been a people *fond of money*; had they been mingled with the people of the earth, among whom they have been scattered, their secular interests would have been greatly promoted by it; and they who have *sacrificed* every thing besides to their *love of money*, on this point have been incorruptible! They chose, in every part of their dispersions, rather to be a poor, despised, persecuted people, and continue *separate from all the people of the earth*, than to enjoy ease and affluence by becoming mixed with the nations. For what great purposes must God be preserving this people! for it does not appear that any moral principle binds them together—they seem lost to this; and yet, in opposition to their interests, for which, in other respects, they would sacrifice every thing, they are still kept distinct from all the people of the earth, and for this, an especial providence can alone account.”

The following passages from Jeremiah, chapter xxx. may not be unsuitable in this place.

“Fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the Lord; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid, for though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished. For thus saith the Lord, thy bruise is incurable,” [the original means *desperate*, not incurable, says a learned commentator,] “and thy wound is grievous. There is none to plead thy cause, that thou mayst be bound up: thou hast no healing medicines. All thy lovers have forgotten thee; they seek thee not; for I have

wounded thee with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of a cruel one, for the multitude of thine iniquity: because thy sins were increased, I have done these things unto thee.—Therefore, all they that devour thee shall be devoured; and they that spoil thee shall be a spoil, and all they that prey upon thee will I give for a prey.” [This will yet be strictly fulfilled on all the existing nations where the Jews have been oppressed, and the time of its fulfilment is thus signally described, verse 23;] “Behold the whirlwind of the Lord goeth forth with fury, a continuing whirlwind: it shall fall with pain on the head of the wicked. The fierce anger of the Lord shall not return, until he have done it, and until he have performed the intents of his heart: *in the latter days ye shall consider it.*” This expression, *the latter days*, plainly shows that the calamitous period here alluded to, has not yet arrived, but it will have arrived before many years are passed away.

The following is added from the next chapter of Jeremiah, beginning with the 35th verse.

“Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; the Lord of Hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from before me saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the Lord; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the city shall be built to the Lord from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner. And the measuring line shall yet go forth over against it upon the hill Gareb, and shall compass about to Goath [or Golgotha.] And the whole valley of the dead bodies, [or the valley of the son of Hinnom,] and the ashes, and

all the fields unto the brook Kidron, unto the corner of the horse-gate towards the east, shall be holy unto the Lord; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever." A commentator remarks: "This cannot mean the city built after the return from Babylon, for two reasons:—1. This city is to be much greater in extent. All the above places, the *fuller's field*, &c. shall become a part of this new city; so that it will be a city much more extensive than the city of Jerusalem ever was; and be suited to that time, when the people shall have the law written in their hearts, as mentioned verse 33. 2. It is to be *permanent*, never to be *thrown down*, agreeably to verse 40. It must therefore mean, if taken literally at all, the city that is to be built by them when they are brought in with the fulness of the Gentiles."

The prophet Zechariah xiv. 9, 10, 11, in speaking of the same time, says: "And the Lord shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one. All the land shall be turned as a plane from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's wine presses. And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited." Says a writer on this place: "After this final restoration of Jerusalem it shall never more be destroyed: but as it was the *first city* of the living God upon earth, so it shall be the *last*; it shall be *safely inhabited*. It shall see war no more."

We will here add the following remarks from Newton, in his dissertations on the prophecies.

"The preservation of the Jews through so many ages, and the total destruction of their enemies, are wonderful events; and are made still more wonderful by being signified beforehand by

the spirit of prophecy, as particularly in the passages before us in Jeremiah. Their preservation is really one of the most illustrious acts of Divine Providence. They are dispersed among all nations, yet not confounded with any. They still live as a distinct people. No people have continued unmingled so long as they have done; and after so many wars, massacres, and persecutions, they still subsist; they are still very numerous. And what but a supernatural power could have preserved them in such a manner, as no other nation upon earth has been preserved; nor is the providence of God less remarkable in the destruction of their enemies, than in their own preservation. Where are now those great and famous monarchies, which in their turn subdued and oppressed the people of God? Are they not vanished as a dream; and not only their power, but their very names, lost in the earth? while the Jews are subsisting as a distinct people at this day. What a wonder of Providence is it, that the vanquished should so many ages survive the victors; and the former be spread all over the world, while the latter are no more? But since the Jews [this once highly favoured and oft delivered people] have absolutely rejected the gospel, and been no longer the peculiar people of God;—where are now those visible manifestations of a divine interposition in their favour? (except in their preservation.) The Jews would do well to consider this point: for rightly considered, it may be an effectual means of opening their eyes."

In concluding, we would here observe. It is supposed by some, that all those representations in prophecy concerning the restoration of the Jews, the building of their city, &c. only refer to the conversion of the Jews, and the grace, blessings and happiness that will flow to them on embracing the gospel. We are aware that the grace and blessings of the gospel are, for the most part, prefigured and set forth by the prophets, by usages, customs, and institutions belonging to the Mosaic dis-

pensation. And, indeed, in what other way could the prophets under the law, give a representation of things belonging to the gospel (of which they were ignorant) except by means of usages with which they were acquainted. For this reason every one must judge for himself respecting the literal meaning of the prophecies. None can believe that any of the Jewish rites and ordinances will ever again be restored or established; and hence the temple mentioned in Ezekiel, must mean the spiritual condition of the church only; at a period, however, which is no doubt yet future, and probably when the Jews are included in it. Nevertheless, the conversion of the Jews, and their restoration to the blessings and enjoyment of the gospel, whether they return to Palestine or not, will be one of the most remarkable and glorious events, and be attended with more signal displays of divine interposition than any event which has taken place since the children of Israel came out of Egypt; and such a restoration is as certain as our own existence. All the figures and emblems, moreover, used by the prophets in reference to this event, and the blessings which will follow after it, have a certain and definite meaning, and will be as certain in their fulfilment. From many passages too, it is difficult not to conceive that the Israelites will yet return to their own land, and that the literal Jerusalem will again be built up and be much more extensive than it has ever before been. But, as already observed, every one must judge for himself on this subject. We will only add, that the conversion of the Jews, whenever it shall take place, will be the work of God and not man, nor of any body or combination of men. It will astonish the nations by the signal displays of divine interposition and Almighty power which will then be manifested, and the submission of the world to the reign of the Messiah, and the peace, tranquillity and happiness of mankind will shortly follow this glorious event of the Jews' conversion.

THE SCATTERING THE POWER OF THE HOLY PEOPLE.

There is passages in Daniel xii. 6, 7, particularly worthy of our consideration. The question is asked "*How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?*" Wonder signifies something *strange*; and the *wonders* or strange things here alluded to, mean the strange dealings of the Lord to men, in *shutting up the words, and sealing the book*; which, however, like all other of the Lord's dealings, is done in mercy on account of the abuse of light. And although during the time the words are shut up, and the book sealed, *many shall run to and fro*, teaching and inculcating a great variety of opinions and sentiments, *and knowledge* in respect to many things *shall* thereby *be* greatly *increased*; yet notwithstanding, mankind, with but few exceptions, will not be able to come to the true knowledge of God, perceive the real condition of things, or enter into a right state, till the words of divine truth are opened to their understandings, and the book of revelation is unsealed to their minds, after the expiration of 1260 years. For the answer returned to the inquiry, how long it shall be to the end of these strange dealings of the Lord to men, in *shutting up the words and sealing the book*, is, "*that it shall be for a time, times, and an half*; AND WHEN HE SHALL HAVE ACCOMPLISHED TO SCATTER THE POWER OF THE HOLY PEOPLE, ALL THESE THINGS SHALL BE FINISHED."

The holy people here means the christians. And how have the christian portion of the world, particularly the better and more honest part of it, been scattering for some time past, and still continue to scatter, divide and separate one from another. Hardly any that are sincere, of honest intentions, and governed by principle, can now be found that are able to act in concert together. Their honesty and integrity of principle prevents them from doing this. For they cannot be induced to assent to what they

believe to be wrong, to abandon principle and depart from the convictions of their own minds (after the maxims and policy of the world) for the sake of acting in concert with others, combining their strength, upholding their cause and advancing their interest and respectability among men: and therefore they have to disagree, divide or separate one from another, bringing upon one of the parties, and generally the best and most conscientious of the two, abuse and persecution, and often loss of property and other sacrifices. It is easy now to perceive that all this is done and suffered through principle, which if the persons had not possessed, these trials and sufferings might have been avoided.

The kingdom of Satan we are given to understand by Christ himself, is not divided. Its subjects know and consult their own interest better than to disagree and be divided; since if they were to do this, as Christ informs us, his kingdom could not stand. The subjects of this kingdom, therefore, all act in unity, concert and agreement with each other. Next to Satan's kingdom, we find that the most corrupt churches in this day can act the most in concert together, and keep from any contention, disagreement or disunion among themselves. For the policy of the world and the wisdom of the serpent, both teach them this; and their regard to their own interest, strength, safety and perpetuity, induces them to act in accordance with such teaching. Corrupt and fallen men will not risk all for the sake of principle and a right cause, endure persecution and reproach, and stand alone unsupported and unprotected except by the Lord alone. We must keep in mind, therefore, as it is declared in the prophecy, that this work of scattering comes from God, and from the honesty he puts into the hearts of men, and not from a corrupt fountain. And as things are now in the world, it is plain, that this scattering and dividing, however painful and unpleasant in itself, is infi-

nately better than if all were to be united and act together in concert in an unrighteous cause; as was the case previous to the time of Wickliffe, and before protestant reformations commenced. Hardly any thing good or right then existed: all comparatively wondered after the beast; and every one who called in question his dogmas or rejected his authority, fell a sacrifice to his power and vengeance. How dark and trying, indeed, was this period; and what benefit has arisen to mankind from the scattering which the Lord has already accomplished among those professing the christian name. Every scattering which has taken place has been attended with beneficial effects. Very few sects now in consequence of the divisions and subdivisions which have taken place, have the power to punish with pains and penalties those who refuse obedience to their authority, or to imprison, confiscate the goods of, or banish such as dissent from them in points of religious doctrines.

It was in the time of Wickliffe that the Lord began this work of scattering the power of professing christians (and it certainly then needed to be scattered) and it has been going on from that time to the present—one sect forming after another till sects are almost innumerable, and many now begin to see the propriety of following with no sect. The propriety of doing this will be more and more seen, and in the end it will have the effect to break up and dissolve all the sects and associations which have been formed in the will and wisdom of men: and mankind will then, without let or hindrance, be enabled to look unto the Lord alone, and put their trust and dependance in him only; instead of being drawn away to look unto, and put their trust and dependance in any sect, or the schemes and systems of men's devising, however plausible or ingenious they may be. This scattering, therefore, will continue to go on till such a result is produced, whatever endeavours may be used to prevent it. For the Lord him-

self has the ordering of it, and will bring it to pass. It follows, that those who come out from sects, and stand alone, unconnected with any of the confederacies or concerts of action in this day, and belong to none of the various unions now formed among men, and put their trust and confidence only in the Lord, are in a situation most to be preferred if they desire to be found right and following the divine will.* For all the societies, unions and confederacies now existing, are seeking their own honour, interest, and advancement, more than the things of Jesus Christ; and they after beguile their adherents and partisans into acts and measures, which in their more reflecting and serious moments they must regret and condemn.

But those who come out from *all*, and stand alone, must expect persecution from *all*. Those were first persecuted, who came out from Judaism and followed Christ. Afterwards, those who came out from the church of Rome had to endure great persecution. Next, those who separated from the first protestant churches; and then again, such were persecuted as separated from those societies, formed from these separations: and thus it has

*Though we thus speak, it is due to honesty to state, that if any who take this step are not prepared to endure trials without murmuring or complaining, and without looking back to the things in Egypt, saying, like the Israelites; "We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick: but now our soul is dried away; there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes"—"would to God we had died in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full! And wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us into this evil place? it is no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates; neither is there any water to drink;" the carcasses of all such complainers and murmurers will fall in the wilderness of trials they will have to pass through, and will never enter the spiritual Canaan of true rest.

proceeded on down to the present time. And so will it continue to be the case as long as sects and parties remain to vindicate their cause, support their several systems, and retaliate upon and stigmatize all those who withstand their authority, oppose their measures or withdraw from under their jurisdiction. When sects no longer exist, and Christ alone is followed and obeyed, there will be an end to all persecution, and not till then: and, as already observed, this will be the condition to which the Lord will at length cause things to be brought. Following Christ alone must now indeed be the first step in the regeneration of the present state of things, in the same manner as those that forsook all, and followed Christ when in the world, were said to follow him *in the regeneration* of the condition of things which existed at that time. Matt. xix. 27, 28. And when this event shall take place, and men shall follow Christ alone, as declared by the angel, all the evils, trials, and divisions, arising from *shutting up the words*, and *sealing the book*, and all the contentions, altercations, and disputes among men, in consequence of not having clear conceptions respecting divine truth, will be finished or come to an end, and the true kingdom of Christ will be established over all the earth.

These things are recorded in prophecy, and they are fast hastening to their accomplishment. As before stated, hardly two are now to be found among the more honest and better sort of people, that can see alike and act in concert. And hence the difficulty of raising up any more sects, except among the more worthless of people, or to keep up harmony, agreement, and concert of action in any religious body, except among those who are in the most corrupt and fallen condition. This difficulty will more and more increase, until no more sects can be raised up, and those in existence come to an end: and then people having no human systems, sects, or false gods to

follow, serve and obey, can follow the Lord alone, and have him for their prophet, priest, and king.

The way commonly has been, as soon as a few could see alike and act in concert, they must needs set about forming a new sect, and put themselves at the head of it as the founders of the society, that they might obtain the honor and glory of such an undertaking, and have their names handed down to posterity as great and distinguished men. But the Lord will shortly put an end to all these works and machinations of men; and the business of raising up new sects or keeping up old ones, will come to a close: for the Lord will put such a portion of honesty in the hearts of men, that the plans and schemes of raising up more sects, or preserving those already existing, will, like Pharaoh's chariot wheels, move heavily, and meet with insuperable obstructions and difficulties; and these impediments and difficulties, will first take place among the better portion of men and the better kind of sects. For judgment always first begins at the house of God, or among his people. As long as people are destitute of principle and governed by interest and worldly policy, they can readily unite and agree in raising up a new sect or in supporting and preserving one already formed, (especially if they are or expect to be among its officers) without being very scrupulous about the means used, or allowing themselves to be hindered in their undertaking by the convictions of duty. For in such cases, policy and their own interest prevail over principle, and they will not permit a regard to truth and a sense of duty to engender contention and disagreement, and defeat them in their purposes and intentions. Hence we find in this day, that in the most corrupt and degenerate religious bodies, where there is but little honesty or integrity of principle, all things proceed very harmoniously, without contention or disagreement. But as soon as the Lord shall put a principle of honesty and integrity into

the hearts of some among them, all this harmony of action and agreement will be at an end, and the work of contention and the demolition of their plans and schemes will commence. And such a principle of honesty will ere long be put into the hearts of some in every sect, as will break up all the sectarian parties and confederacies now existing, and scatter them asunder so that they can never be gathered or put together again; and nothing can stay or hinder the accomplishment of this event; for it is under the direction and control of an Almighty arm.

The present is indeed in a peculiar manner a time of the Lord's scattering, and all who attempt to build up any thing, or endeavour to support what has already been built up in the wisdom and will of man, will have a most difficult task to perform: while those who in the wisdom and power which cometh from above, and with honesty and sincerity hazard all, and are willing to suffer for a faithful testimony against the works and doings of men, will find the way made plain before them, and the work will prosper in their hands and be finally followed with success. When the Lord shall have accomplished this important and necessary work of scattering all that men have devised and built up, and effectually put an end to their building up any thing more, the words of divine truth will be opened to men's understandings, and the book mentioned in Daniel will be unsealed. Mankind will then all see what is truth and what is error, as clearly perhaps as they can now distinguish between the metals they use. Hence, there will be no contention respecting what is truth, but all will be of one heart and one mind. And thus the Lord will establish that kingdom of truth and righteousness among his people, in which there will be no disunion; no want of unity; no jarring, disagreement, or contention; but all will proceed in harmony, love, and affection, one towards another. For all will be done in accordance

with the truth, unmixed with any human policy, or the devices of men. None will be seeking their own interest, honor or exaltation, but the things of Jesus Christ, and the welfare and happiness of one another. There will be but *one shepherd*, and *one fold*, and consequently be no parties, disunion or strife among mankind. For, as foretold by the prophet, "In that day the Lord shall be king over all the earth: there shall be one Lord and his name one." Such are the truths which the Lord hath seen fit to reveal, and they are worthy of the most serious consideration of every one who bears the christian name, as little as they are seen or regarded at the present time.

THE LATTER TIME.

It was said by Christ, *when the Son of man cometh shall he find faith on the earth?* It is also said when the seven vials of the seven last plagues are given to the seven angels to pour out upon the earth, that *the temple was filled with smoke*, and that *no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled*. Again, it is declared in Isaiah, that when Christ comes to redeem and deliver his people, *he looked and there was none to help; and he wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore, his own arm brings salvation*. All these passages go to show, in language not to be misunderstood, that when Christ comes to subdue the world to righteousness, and to set up his kingdom on the earth, mankind in general will be wholly turned from the right way, and be altogether unfit and incapable of lending any assistance or aid in redeeming men from the evils and corruptions that will then abound in the world. All will be departed out of the true way of the gospel, and be weak and helpless in regard to promoting the right cause or the kingdom of righteousness in the earth. Therefore, as declared by the prophet, Christ alone will accomplish the great and glorious undertaking of renovating the earth by

his own power and spirit. Hence, the great boast or expectation of Protestant sects, that they will be the means or instruments in bringing the church into a right state, and of establishing the kingdom of Christ on the earth, falls to the ground.

The correctness of these views is confirmed by what is said in Daniel concerning the stone (or kingdom of Christ) that shall *become a great mountain, and fill the whole earth*—it is to be *cut out without hands*. The word of the Lord to Zerubbabel, will best explain what is here meant. "*Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit saith the Lord of hosts*." A commentator on this place thus remarks: "*Not by might*, (of thy own) *nor by power*, (authority from others) *but by my Spirit*. The providence, authority, power and energy, of the Most High. In this way shall my church be raised and preserved. No secular arm, no human prudence, no earthly policy, shall ever be used for the founding, extension, and preservation of my church. But the spirit of the world says,—These are *means*, to which we must have recourse; otherwise the cause of God may be ruined." How abundantly are such *means* used in the present day? And what are their effect and tendency? Not to build up the cause of Christ, but the cause of men, of sects, and the self consequence and exaltation of individuals. Other and different means will be employed when the time comes that the *stone* is cut out *without hands*. No sect or body of people that may then exist, will have part or lot in building up the kingdom of Christ on the earth. All will be gone out of the right way, and be in a most fallen condition, so as to be altogether unprofitable and useless in the Lord's work of renovating the world, and bringing things into a right state. As it is said in Isaiah; *he looked, and there was none to help; and he wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore his own arm brought salvation*, independent of the aid of any sects or associa-

tions of professing christians, of any human rules, systems or devices of men, or the efforts and undertakings of conspicuous individuals, so that no flesh shall be able to glory in his presence, or boast of what they have done in his cause. For Christ will by himself establish his kingdom and reign on the earth without the aid of man, subduing and breaking in pieces all earthly kingdoms, so that they shall become *like the chaff of the summer threshing floors*; and the winds of their own unsettled and restless minds, by raising wars, tumults and commotions, will carry them away, and completely overthrow them, *so that no place will be found for them*: and the true kingdom of Christ will supply their place over all the earth; or as it is expressed in Daniel ii. 44, 45, and vii. 18, 27, "The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess it for ever: and the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."

These things will, ere long, all be fulfilled. The tumults, strifes, and commotions, which are now beginning on the earth, are fast hastening this important event; and these tumults and commotions will go on increasing and extending more and more from this time, till not one stone upon another of all which men have erected, set up, or established in church or state, is left, that shall not be thrown down and destroyed. And who shall be able to endure through all these trials and commotions? Christ, in particular reference to these events, says: "Watch and pray, that ye may be accounted worthy *to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.*" The very existence of such events as are now commencing, show that the coming of Christ to accomplish all the predictions respecting his kingdom, is near at hand; and the words before quoted, plainly imply

that some who are living at the beginning of these troubles and tumults may be preserved and endure through them all, and stand before the Son of man in that kingdom which he will establish on the earth. We must not, however, expect the full accomplishment of all these important events for some time hence, as the troublesome, trying, and tumultuous times, have hardly yet begun. Infidelity must yet rise up and have the dominion, proclaim herself queen, and defy any overthrow. Next, kings and priests will obtain the ascendancy, and for a short time rule with the most despotic and revengeful sway, exercising the most relentless cruelty upon all infidels and those who do not yield submission to their will. But *their troubles will soon begin*. For Christ himself will go forth against them, who is Lord of lords, and King of kings—their councils will become distracted; they will array themselves in parties, and turn their strength and violence upon each other. This will be the *treading of the wine-press of the wrath of God*, when mankind will be slaughtered by millions, and leave not a vestige of power or strength in any earthly kingdom on the termination of these bloody conflicts among themselves: and then will the peaceable and glorious reign of Christ begin, and overspread the whole earth; producing universal happiness, tranquillity and love one towards another among mankind.* These things are seen with a clearness beyond what words can express; and they will go on developing themselves more and more in coming events, till all are fulfilled. A belief or disbelief respecting them, will neither hinder nor hasten their accomplishment; and let the award of delusion rest on the writer, if all these events do not speedily and regularly proceed to their accomplishment.

*"And they shall beat their swords into ploughshares; and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." *Isaiah ii. 2. 4.*

[From the N. Y. Commercial Advertiser.]
Extract from a letter of an American,
now making a tour of Europe, dated
 MILAN, August 1, 1832.

Cholera is not the only cause which disturbs the tranquillity of Europe. Two great principles are at present waging active warfare with each other. The spirit of constitutional freedom, is combating with the spirit of despotism. Thirty years have produced great changes in Europe. The different nations of Europe, have at length awakened to a perception of the rights of man, and the voice of constitutional freedom has made itself heard in every part. It is not a little gratifying to the pride of an American, to know that it is the example and success of his own native institutions that has given the greatest impulse to the spirit of amelioration, that has manifested itself in Europe. This spirit has already made rapid and permanent progress in England and France; and the instrumentality of those countries may perhaps become the efficient agents for extending its influence elsewhere.

It is true, Poland, treacherously abandoned, has been crushed—but it is not a hopeless case, and she may again revive under better auspices. Italy, likewise deceived by the prospect of assistance from England and France, has been unsuccessful in her attempts to throw off the yoke of her oppressors, but the sentiments and spirit of her inhabitants remain unaltered, and the bayonets of the Austrians are scarcely able to suppress them. It is in Germany, and particularly in Austria and Prussia, that civilized despotism has its finest hold. The immense armies that these powers keep on foot, show their distrust, and are doubtless the principal cause that checks the growth of liberal sentiment. Yet these sentiments do exist, and to a considerable extent, even in Austria and Prussia, but more particularly in the smaller territories near the Rhine. Here, since ten years, English has become very generally spoken among the better

classes; and they have considerable acquaintance with English and American opinions, politics and literature. Here in these smaller states the extension of liberal principles is wide, and the expression of them more bold and open.—But were the whole thirty-seven of them to revolutionize, their votes would be outweighed in the Diet by those of Prussia alone—and their combined military force would be inadequate to cope with the gigantic armies of these two great powers.

The great obstacles to the production of a revolution in Germany, are to be found in the character of the people, and the existence of a military force competent to support such a movement at its commencement. At present, it is almost hopeless to expect that one can be effected; the attempt, even if general, would be unsuccessful from the nature of the military force that would be brought in opposition.—Austria has over 600,000, and Prussia 400,000 soldiers, equipped and ready for action at the shortest notice. These men, especially the Austrians, are perfectly disciplined machines. Thews and sinews, without soul or feeling. They know no law, but obedience to the voice of their officers—have no ties with the rest of the people, and would act with as little remorse against their own countrymen, as they would against a foreign enemy. Until this force is broken down, the elevation of Germany to a government compatible with the dignity of humanity, is scarcely to be expected.

The march of reformation, when once begun, must naturally progress; it may be retarded, but cannot be stopped.—Success may strengthen for a time the hands of despotism, but its overthrow, though it may be slow, is sure.

[From the New York Albion.]

ASPECT OF EUROPE.

That the present aspect of continental politics indicate the approaching dissolution of the peace of the European family cannot be questioned.

The war, we are told, on the authority of Mr. Canning, is to be a war of opinion, and will partake of all its fury and pertinacy. The North of Europe, having recovered from the long and bloody wars with Napoleon, now appears like a giant refreshed, cased in armour, and ready to engage in deadly strife. Prussia is one vast camp, and wears the appearance of actual war—the Russian battalions are replenished, and Austria is ready for the field. In a war of opinion, which means a war of liberal opinions against conservative principles, the interests of these three powers, including Holland, must be identical; while a disposition on the part of England, France, and Belgium, will exist, to join their forces on the opposite side. The whole continent, indeed, is a mass of combustibles, and only requires a match to enkindle a general conflagration. The late manifesto of the German Diet against the press, shows how far matters have proceeded in that quarter; and it shows also, the determination of the despotic powers to suppress all popular movements there, and to maintain the present order of things. The reign of Louis Philippe is most uncertain—even a change of ministry with him may produce important consequences, and give vent to the active sympathies of the French in behalf of their liberal brethren of the Germanic confederation. Any active interposition of the French, which will sooner or later take place, will infallibly bring down the northern hordes with the impetuosity of an avalanche, and a general war must then ensue. We do not pretend to predict the day nor the hour when these things will happen, but that they will come to pass, is as morally and politically certain as any event already recorded in the history of nations.

[From the *English Quarterly Review*.]

Bassora, which is situated at the head of the Persian Gulf, on the river Euphrates, and contains about 60,000 inhabitants, is the great market for Asiatic produce destined for the Ottoman Empire. The cho-

lera lasted fourteen days in this city, in which time it carried off from 15,000 to 18,000 persons, or nearly one fourth of the inhabitants. From Bassora it was carried by the boats navigating the Tigris as far as Bagdad, and there it destroyed one third of the population.

[From the *U. States Gazette*.]

In looking over the English papers received by the last arrival, we have met with the following singular paragraph:

THE PLAGUE OF FIERY SERPENTS.

The following is an extract of a letter dated Bassorah the 24th of August, 1831, and received in Calcutta by an Armenian gentleman:—"Almost every country in these regions of the globe has been visited by a dreadful visitation of Providence. You must have been, long before this, informed of the many calamities that have befallen the devoted city of Bagdad, and the places adjacent to it. News has also been received from Hanadan, or the ancient Ecbatana, of the occurrence of another natural calamity in that place. The city is described to be literally infested with a species of fiery serpents, the bite of which is followed by immediate madness, which in the course of a very short time, terminates in the death of the sufferer. The streets of the town are said to be choked with dead bodies, which are fed upon by dogs and jackals! The inhabitants are seized with consternation and trepidation, not knowing where to fly from the anger of the Almighty."—*India Gazette*, December 23.

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** Should any receive the present number who do not wish the 13th volume continued to them, they will please write their name on the number (if not already on it) and enclosing it in a substantial wrapper, direct "*Reformer, Philadelphia*," and if arrearages are paid up, the name shall be erased. It is not our wish to continue to send the numbers to any against their free choice, as those who feel an interest in a work can more cheerfully make payment, and it is on such subscribers more than on a large list of names that the permanency of a publication must depend.

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